

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
AND
REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

3RD AUGUST 2026, AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors Karen May (Co-Chair), Rachael Bailes, Juliet Barker Smith, Matthew Dormer (Co-Chair), Joanna Kane, Nic Pioli, Siobhan Robinson, Jane Spilsbury, Harrison Warren-Clarke and Peter Whittaker

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mrs B. Talbot and Mrs J. Bayley-Hill

21 **TO NOMINATE A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

A nomination was received for Councillor K. May to Chair the meeting. The nomination was proposed by Councillor P. Whittaker and seconded by Councillor M. Dormer.

RESOLVED that

Councillor K. May be appointed to Chair the meeting.

22 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

Members were informed that prior to the meeting, the following changes had been made to the membership of the Joint Appointments Committee:

- Councillor J. Barker Smith had replaced Councillor S. Harvey.
- Councillor H. Warren-Clarke had replaced Councillor P. McDonald.
- Councillor S. Robinson had replaced Councillor R. Hunter.

The relevant political group leaders would provide an update on these membership changes at the following ordinary meetings of Council at the respective authorities.

23 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

24 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee held on 17th March 2026 were submitted.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee held on 17th March 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

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REPORT TO THE JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

The Chief Executive presented a report which proposed that the post of Executive Director of Governance and Assurance should be introduced at the Councils. At the same time, the current post of Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services would be deleted. It was proposed that the Executive Director post should be confirmed as the role of the authorities' Monitoring Officer, which was a statutory post currently held by the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.

Members were informed that the proposed position had been job evaluated by West Midlands Employers. The role and duties of the postholder had also been reviewed by external legal consultants, who had advised on the content of the report to the Joint Appointments Committee and the proposals detailed in the report.

In considering the proposals, Members were asked to note that the report focused on the role, rather than on the existing postholder as an individual. The aim of the change would be to strengthen the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) arrangements at the Councils. The introduction of the Executive Director of Governance and Assurance post for the Monitoring Officer would also enable the authorities to comply with national best practice, whereby the three Statutory Officers (the Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer) were able to come together as part of the "golden triangle" of key local government officers, with recognised authority in order to strengthen strategic leadership capacity, corporate governance, organisational resilience and executive-level assurance during a period of significant organisational change.

Prior to the meeting, the Councils had been undertaking a trial by which the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services had been attending meetings of SLT and operating at a more strategic level. This trial had enabled the authorities to test arrangements and it had become apparent that it had had a positive impact, enhancing governance arrangements at the authorities.

West Midlands Employers, in job evaluating the role, had determined that the duties of the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services were appropriate to grade at an Executive Director level. Subject to Members' agreement of the proposals detailed in the report, the current postholder would therefore be eligible to assume the role of Executive Director.

The Chief Executive already had delegated authority to recruit to various senior officer roles. The report was being presented for Members' consideration at the Joint Appointments Committee meeting because of the implications for the Monitoring Officer role: the appointment of the Monitoring Officer, as a statutory Officer position, was a Council function to determine. However, there was no proposal to change the Councils' Monitoring Officer but instead to redesignate the post that would operate as Monitoring Officer at both authorities from the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services to the Executive Director of Governance and Assurance.

The position of Executive Director of Governance and Assurance would be eligible to receive higher remuneration than the position of Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services. The top of the scale for the Assistant Director post at the employing authority, Bromsgrove District Council, was, with a pay award pending, £96,665 whilst the bottom of the Executive Director scale was £114,282. This information was in the public domain, in line with requirements to publish annual pay policy statements for local authorities. The deletion of the Assistant Director post would help to address the majority of the costs arising from the Executive Director post.

Once the report had been presented, Members discussed the following points in detail:

- The duties of the Executive Director post and whether additional training would be offered to support the postholder and potential future postholders in that role. Officers confirmed that all staff were expected to commit to their continuing personal development and to attend training to enable them to best perform in their roles.
- The extent to which it was inappropriate for statutory officers to be employed at different levels of local government. Clarification was provided that employment at the same or similar senior level was considered to be best practice.
- The current mix of officers within SLT. The Committee was advised that currently all of the permanent members of SLT were men. Although the proposals focused on the role, rather than the individual current postholder, the proposed changes would also start to reset the balance as the current postholder was a woman.
- The Local Government Reorganisation programme and the extent to which there might be a public perception that this change had been made in order to enhance the redundancy package available to senior officers once the new Unitary Authority was in place. Members were informed that all staff, with the exception of the Chief Executives, would be TUPE transferred to the new Unitary Authority on vesting day and no decisions had yet been taken in respect of permanent appointments to senior positions at that Council. In addition, it was important to ensure that the best arrangements were in place for the efficient management of services provided by Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough

Councils in the meantime, so that service delivery remained uninterrupted.

- The position of Executive Director of Governance and Assurance and how this compared to similar roles across the country. Confirmation was provided that in addition to advice from external experts, Officers had identified comparable roles at other authorities and had noted similarities.
- The reasons why Members had not been consulted on the trial. Members were advised that the Head of Paid Service was responsible for operational service delivery and had identified that this trial could result in positive outcomes. The arrangements for SLT had not been covert, with key information about SLT having been highlighted in the service directory for the Councils, copies of which had been shared with every Member of both authorities.
- The reasons for holding a trial. The decision had been taken to trial these arrangements in order to assess whether it would better support strategic and operational service delivery.
- The length of the trial. The Committee was advised that the trial had started in October 2025.
- The impact of the trial on governance at the Councils. Members were informed that the trial had enabled the statutory officers at the Councils to work closely together at a more equal level, thereby enhancing governance and assurance, including in respect of internal and external audit work.
- The impact of the trial outside governance arrangements. The suggestion was made that the trial had had a beneficial impact on service performance arrangements. There had also been positive contributions in terms of the impact on organisational culture.
- The performance measures that had helped analyse the impact of the trial. Clarification was provided that key measures included contributions to the Annual Governance Statements, the successful Local Government Reorganisation submission and a growing emphasis on governance and assurance across the two authorities. This had had a positive impact on performance culture at the Councils.
- The need for the Chief Executive to have access to an efficient and skilled SLT team and to recognise that the Head of Paid Service could not act alone when managing the authorities.
- The reasons why opportunities to take part in the trial had not been advertised. Members were informed that the Councils already had a Monitoring Officer, so there was no need to advertise a position.
- The extent to which the trial and introduction of this role could have formed part of a wider restructure of the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) at the authorities. Notwithstanding the potential for a wider restructure, Members were informed that the conclusion had been reached that this change was needed. The proposals had been shared with all members of CLT in advance of the meeting.
- The wider impact of the introduction of this role on the structure of both SLT and CLT. The Committee was advised that the proposals would help to enhance both SLT and CLT.

- The potential impact that the deletion of the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services post could have on career development opportunities available to managers in the department employed at a more junior level. Clarification was provided that information about the proposals had been shared with managers reporting to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services and positive responses had been received. There would also be an opportunity arising from these changes to review wider structures if considered necessary.
- The financial costs arising from the promotion of the current Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services to an Executive Director post. It was noted that, due to shared service arrangements, any financial costs would be shared between the two authorities and given the Assistant Director post would be deleted, the additional costs would be relatively limited.
- The likely longevity of the post once the new North Worcestershire Council had been established. The Committee was informed that, with the exception of the Head of Paid Service role, which would be subject to competition, all staff currently employed by Bromsgrove and Redditch Council would be automatically TUPE transferred to the new Unitary Authority. In the meantime, staff would continue to deliver services on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils until 31st March 2028. Any specific arrangements for the new Council were not known by the date of the meeting.
- The Job Description and Job Specification for the Executive Director post and whether these had been developed. Confirmation was provided that they had been developed with the support of external HR advice and that the proposals regarding the role had been shared with the Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.
- The importance of governance to local authorities and the need to ensure that governance arrangements were robust. Members welcomed investment in governance and assurance at a senior level of the authorities.
- The potential for the job evaluation exercise to have been shared with Members as part of the report to the Committee. Members were informed that job evaluation was a very technical exercise and therefore the paperwork would not necessarily have added value to the report that had been presented to Members.
- An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been undertaken as part of the process.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor M. Dormer and seconded by Councillor P. Whittaker.

RESOLVED

- 1) that proposed changes to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) structure be considered and endorsed;**

- 2) that the deletion of the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services post and creation of the Executive Director Governance and Assurance post following completion of the job evaluation exercise be agreed;
- 3) that the Executive Director of Governance and Assurance post be confirmed as the successor to the current Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services post and assimilation of the current postholder to the successor role be approved, subject to completion of the Councils' organisational change processes and confirmation that the roles are sufficiently similar;
- 4) to NOTE that the three Executive Directors would deputise for the Chief Executive in his absence; and

RECOMMENDED to Full Council at Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council that

- 5) the Executive Director of Governance and Assurance be designated as the Councils' Monitoring Officer.

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TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING

There was no urgent business for consideration on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 6.45 pm

Chairman